

ADDRESS

OF THE

BOARD OF MANAGERS

OF

THE AMERICAN COLONIZATION SOCIETY

TO ITS

AUXILIARY SOCIETIES.

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ADDRESS.

THE great and increasing interest felt by the American People in the colonization of free persons of color in Africa, while it justifies the most sanguine hopes of the authors of this scheme of benevolence, claims from the Board of Managers a full and candid exposition of the manner in which the trust committed to them has been fulfilled. Resting entirely on public opinion, this opinion, to be correct, should be enlightened. Guided by this principle, the whole administration of the affairs of the colony at Liberia, from the inception of the plan, has been disclosed before the public in annual or more frequent statements, which have been widely disseminated throughout the whole extent of our country. In these statements will be found the original proposition for the formation of the society; the plan and constitution adopted; the expeditions fitted out to Liberia; the perils that sprang up, with the holy and heroic enthusiasm which overcame them; the number of emigrants which successively left our shores for those of Africa; the policy pursued in administering the concerns of the colony; exhibiting the radical laws for the government of the colonists; the donations in the United States, specifically stated, and their application; with all other information possessing sufficient interest to gratify a laudable curiosity, or fitted to ensure a correct accountability. But this mass of information is spread through many volumes, which few possess, and which those who do may not, without considerable trouble, be able to embody under distinct views. It is this task, so far at least as to present a condensed statement sufficiently comprehensive for present purposes, that the Board of Managers now undertake to discharge—a task which they consider at this time the more important, from the existence, in some parts of the United States, of misapprehensions of the policy and measures of the society.

As it would extend this communication to a length frustrative of its principal object, to give a more detailed record of the historical events of the colony, this will not be here attempted; but, whatever is considered necessary to the formation of a correct judgment on the object, policy, and measures of the society, will be supplied.

The society was established in the year 1817. At this time a deep interest was taken throughout the United States in the fate of the people of color, as well those in a state of slavery as those who were free. The evil was universally admitted, the remedy doubtful and contested. So various, and, indeed, discordant were the views entertained and urged on this head, and, in many instances, so angry the feelings excited, that discussion, so far from approximating differing opinions to each other, every day widened the breach, and threatened an abortion of the various schemes of beneficence suggested. In this portentous state of things, the proposition to form a society on principles in which good men of all parties and sects might cordially unite, was received with almost universal favor. These principles were embodied in the plan of the American Society for Colonizing the Free People of Color of the United States. Its founders contemplated slavery as a great evil; but, looking at it in its practical aspects, perceived that, under our political institutions, its alleviation or eradication called for the most deliberate and tender treatment, and would, in all human probability, be most effectually advanced

under the moral influence of an enlightened public opinion, by those most deeply and directly interested in the subject. While, therefore, they determined to avoid the question of slavery, they proposed the formation of a colony on the coast of Africa, as an asylum for free people of color. The plan was founded on these considerations.

The amalgamation of the whites and blacks in one homogeneous community was deemed impracticable.

The nominal freedom and equivocal condition of the free people of color in the United States would, it was believed, by their colonization in Africa, be converted into genuine liberty and real prosperity.

The most efficient instruments for subverting the slave trade would be supplied by such a colony.

Its existence would be the strongest inducement to the gradual and provident manumission of slaves, with a view to their colonization.

On this ground the society was established; on this ground it has been prosecuted; and, so long as its constitution endures, on this ground exclusively must its future measures be taken. Did, indeed, their consciences permit them to look for a rule of conduct in considerations of mere expediency, they might triumphantly point to the inestimable value of a plan, unassuming in its origin, yet susceptible of boundless extension, which, in uniting a whole nation, already consisting of twelve millions, and doubling every twenty-five years, must, from the force of this union, at no very remote period, be able, by a moderate contribution of each individual, to effect the mightiest end. By this union will be perpetuated the germ and growth of an institution whose final expansion imagination can scarcely anticipate.

While, however, this principle must continue to be, as it has heretofore been, the guide and the guardian of this society, it should not be inferred that there is, or can be, any influence exerted by it that can interfere in the slightest degree with the diffusion of principles or the prosecution of measures by others, which may affect any other collateral objects. The emancipation of slaves or the amelioration of their condition, with the moral, intellectual, and political improvement of people of color within the United States, are subjects foreign to the powers of this society. To mingle them with the great and exclusive end of the Colonization Society, would be destructive to it. But it does not follow, because the Society does not directly encourage these objects, that it is either hostile to them, or that it exercises any deleterious influence in regard to them. As well might it be said, that the Constitution of the United States, by abjuring any connexion with, or recognition of any particular religious tenets, exercised an influence unfriendly to true religion; whereas we all know that it is preeminently owing to this constitutional forbearance, that the purity of religion in this country is not alloyed by the prejudices and corruptions that have debased it in other portions of the globe. Let these interesting topics, on which such differences of opinion are honestly entertained, rest on their own foundations. It is for the Colonization Society, agreeably to its organic law, amidst these conflicting sentiments, to maintain, in its official relations, the strictest partiality.

Under the guardianship of this fundamental principle, the Society was founded. It soon commanded the friendship and support of good and distinguished men, from the South as well as the North, from the West as well as the East. A Washington, a Madison, a Crawford, a Marshall, a Clay, an Adams, a Carroll, and a host of other worthies, were soon enrolled among its friends. Local feelings were lost in a general concentration of opinion. Funds were raised by individual subscriptions, and agents appointed to select the most favorable region in Africa for a colony. Difficulties of the usual kind arose, but were overcome principally by moral means. Land for a colony at Liberia was selected, and fairly paid for. The first feelings of hostility, entertained by some of the natives, was exchanged for a confidence founded on a more correct knowledge of our object, and perception of the benefits it would confer upon them.

Towards the promotion of the colony, nineteen expeditions have been fitted out, and 1,857 emigrants, including re-captured Africans, landed on the shores of Africa. To each family a farm, or town-lot, or both, have been assigned. Three towns, viz. those of Monrovia, Caldwell, and Millsburg, have been formed, and are, considering the infancy of the colony, in a flourishing state. Fortifications to defend it have been erected, and several small vessels, for the same end, and to check the slave trade, have been furnished; a system of government, in which the colonists participate as much as prudence will permit, is in full and successful operation; various places of worship have been built, and freedom of religion secured; and a system of public schools devised, that promises to extend to all the colonists the blessings of education. The commerce of the colony may be said to be flourishing—an effect almost necessarily flowing from its exemption from restraint, and is rapidly extending; and the mechanic arts and agriculture, gradually progressive. The climate, for people of color, is decidedly salubrious, although, like all other low latitudes, settlers from other climates are often, for the first season, exposed to considerable mortality. As an evidence of the general salubrity, the existence of 2,000 colonists supersedes all doubts.

Upon the whole, it may, it is believed, be affirmed, that the annals of mankind scarcely present us with the instance of a colony, so remote in its position, that, in so short a time, has obtained such maturity. When to this it is added that the colony has been principally fostered by the contributions of individuals, its friends have abundant reason for congratulation at the success of a scheme, which, under the smiles of Providence, has so signally prospered.

On the score of salubrity the Board of Managers have felt the deepest solicitude. It should not be disguised that this is a point of cardinal importance—one full of moral and conscientious considerations, as well as pregnant with the eventual fate of the colony. In proportion to the strength of these considerations is the admitted obligation to the observance of the utmost candor. Whatever great final good may be promised, as guardians of a high public trust, they do not consider themselves as morally authorized, even as the means of its accomplishment, to sport with the lives of their fellow-men. Human life, in their opinion, is too precious to its possessor, to be sacrificed without the most weighty and sufficient reason. They, therefore, pledge themselves to the nation to declare, on this point, the truth, the whole truth. Appreciating its importance, they have used every means of obtaining correct information. The result is a conviction that the health of the colony is not inferior to the Southern portions of the United States; that emigrants, after the first year's residence, do not incur a greater mortality; that, during the first season, there is a more than ordinary mortality, and that, in this respect, there is a marked difference in favor of emigrants, from the Southern States and low lands, over those who go from the North or mountain regions; that there is reason, from experience, to conclude, as the most fatal diseases in the colony yield readily to medicine, that a great portion of the mortality that has occurred has arisen from the temporary want of medical assistance—a circumstance that, it is hoped, will not again occur, as, besides the regular physician, the Colonial Agent is also a physician of respectability, and means have been taken to educate persons of color for the profession. In the mean time, every precautionary expedient is adopted to prevent and alleviate disease. An appropriation of eight hundred dollars has been recently made for the erection and support of a hospital. A liberal provision exists for resident medical services; a full supply of medicine, with surgical and other instruments, are furnished; and suitable buildings prepared for the emigrants, who are, during the first season, whenever necessary, maintained from the public stores established by the Board of Managers, who may, on this head, claim the merit of having steadily extended to the colonists the utmost kindness and tenderness. This object has, indeed, been one of cardinal interest; from an early period of the colony, towns and other positions for

settlement having been established in its interior, to which, recently, emigrants have been sent for the first season, and, in one instance, with a success which leads the Board to hope, that a regard to this point, in connexion with judicious medical treatment, will divest the climate of Liberia of all its terrors. And that no further practicable means may be left untried, directions have been given to their agents to supply the most precise and full statistical information of the colony, including the interior and elevated country; thus calling in the aid of science and liberal research on this most interesting point, and with the express view, in case the superior salubrity of the interior country shall recommend it, to extend the settlements of the colonists.

It has been remarked, that one of the great ends of this institution was the extirpation of the slave trade. On the atrocity of this curse of humanity, we happily entertain, in this country, but one opinion; and, deplorable as its effects have already been, whatever shall effectually contribute to this extirpation may be hailed as of inestimable importance. For, great as is the evil already inflicted, what comparison can it bear to that which the perpetuated continuance of this nefarious traffic would inevitably have on the happiness and dignity of a large portion of the human family—continuing, with augmented strength, the wars and massacres, and depopulation and vices of Africa, with the calamitous effects of extended slavery in every region of the earth that should receive this unfortunate race? It was well said, at the time the Society was founded, that this traffic would receive its surest and deadliest, if not its only effectual blow, in Africa itself. This prediction has, in no mean degree, been already verified in our colony. As might be expected, it is treated there with the most indignant abhorrence; and more than one instance has already occurred, in which the colonists have spontaneously risen in their strength, and crushed, with a signal vengeance, those who dared to pollute their soil, or its vicinity, with its accursed fruits.

In the early stages of the colony, the United States having passed laws to give effect to those prohibiting the slave trade, which was declared piracy, authorized the transportation to Liberia of such Africans as should be re-captured by our vessels; and, for the purpose of carrying this power into effect, have, at that time and since, so far aided the colony, as to contribute to the support of the Colonial Agent, to the supply of arms, and erection of fortifications, to the compensation, for a season, of a physician, and to some other agents, connected with a provision for the temporary maintenance and protection of the re-captured Africans. The greater part of these expenses were incurred many years since, have averaged about the annual sum of about \$9,000, and are now considerably reduced. Some exception has been taken, in a solitary official document, drawn up by a subordinate officer, to the expenditures of the Government, which it is not further necessary to notice than by observing, that these disbursements were made by the Government itself, who alone, and not the Board of Managers, are answerable for them; that the object, for which they were expended, is more than equal to the amount expended; and that a very moderate acquaintance with the difficulties and perils incident to the establishment of remote settlements, united with a due sense of the dignity of the object, must convince every liberal American mind of the insignificance of the means, thus applied, to the importance of the end.

With the exception of this contribution, for which the friends of the cause should be grateful, notwithstanding its moderate amount, and the annual aid of \$1,000 by the State of Maryland, and a small donation by Virginia, the funds of the Society have been derived from individual contributions.

From the records of the Society, it appears that the contributions received have been as follows. It should be noted, that the amounts include the expenses of collection, which are not inconsiderable.

In 1820, 1821, & 1822,	\$5,625 66
1823,	4,798 02
1824,	4,379 89
1825,	10,125 85
1826,	14,779 24
1827,	13,294 94
1828,	13,458 17
1829,	19,795 61
1830,	26,583 51
	<u>\$112,841 89</u>

And that the annual expenditures are as follows:

In 1820, 1821, & 1822,	\$3,875 79
1823,	6,766 17
1824,	3,851 42
1825,	7,543 88
1826,	17,316 94
1827,	13,901 74
1828,	17,077 12
1829,	18,487 34
1830,	17,637 32
Balance on hand,	6,384 17
	<u>\$112,841 89</u>

To secure a strict accountability, each donation is published in the African Repository, and a statement annually published of the sums expended. The distinct objects of these expenditures are too numerous to give here in detail. But it is important, to the end of this communication, that the amounts of the leading items of expense should be distinguished.

1. The first item consists of the expenses attending the transportation of emigrants. The cost of each emigrant, including his subsistence from his embarkation to his landing at Liberia, is about twenty-three dollars. If to this sum be added the expense of collecting the emigrants often from remote points, and that incidental to fitting out the vessel, the cost may be stated at twenty-six dollars.

2. The subsistence of each emigrant at the colony for six months after his arrival, which may be estimated at thirteen dollars.

3. The compensation of the agents and officers of the Society at the colony, which are, for the Colonial Agent:

Paid by the Government,	\$1,600
Paid by the Society,	800
	<u>\$800</u>

For the physician of the colony, - - - - - 1,500

At present there is but one permanent physician. There have, at times, been two, and one for temporary duty is about going out.

For other officers, - - - - - 1,000

In aid of public schools, estimated at - - - - - 700

For arms and warlike munitions, armed vessel, &c. estimated at - 1,500

An expense of \$3,000 has been lately incurred for an armed schooner, to transport supplies from one part of the colony to another, and in protecting the colony and checking the slave trade.

For public buildings, medicines, and sundry incidental charges, estimated at - - - - - 500

\$6,000

4. The administrative expenses within the United States, consisting of:	
Salary of Corresponding Secretary, - - - - -	\$1,250
Do. Clerk to Treasurer, - - - - -	600
* Compensation of agents in different sections of the United States, engaged in forming auxiliary societies, collecting funds, and diffusing information respecting the objects of the Society, estimated at -	1,000
Postage of letters, &c. about - - - - -	150
Office rent, printing, and stationary, about - - - - -	1,500
	<u>\$4,500</u>

During the three last years, the receipts and expenditures appear to have been as follows:

Received in donations, - - - - -	\$59,927 29
Expended, - - - - -	53,201 18

Leaving a balance on hand, on the 31st December, 1830, of - - \$7,056 07
Which has since been expended.

Making an average expenditure of about 18,000 dollars, consisting of charges for:

Transportation and subsistence of emigrants on their passage, -	\$5,902
Their subsistence at Liberia for six months, -	2,951
Compensation of the agents and officers of the Society at the Colony, for public schools, arms, and military supplies, public buildings, medicines, and sundry incidental expenses, - - - -	6,000
Expenses of administration within the United States, - - - -	4,500
	<u>\$19,353</u>

During this period, 681 emigrants have been sent to Liberia, being an average of 227 in each year.

From this view of the expenses of the Society, it follows, that those incurred in the transportation of the emigrant and his subsistence on the voyage, are exceeded by the other expenses incident to the colony. This is readily accounted for, by the consideration that, in many respects, the expenses of the colony are at present nearly the same as they would be if greatly extended. Such an extension would but little increase the compensation to the necessary officers and agents here, and the charges incidental to the organization, government, and protection, of the colony.

This detailed view of the expenses of the colony is given, not only that public opinion may exercise a salutary control over the expenditures, but likewise with the view of making an explanation, which, it is hoped, will be satisfactory, of some incidents of recent occurrence.

It has been represented that, in this great scheme of beneficence, whose accomplishment at present depends, with a single exception, on the spontaneous offerings of individuals, it is just, that those who contribute the means should enjoy the right of directing the mode of their application; that, while all the friends of the cause unite in the leading end of the institution, there are various ways of carrying it into effect, on the relative benefits of which different minds may form different conclusions; that some of these are particularly fitted to some parts of the Union, while different ones are not less fitted to other parts of the Union; and that, by allowing each donor, in case he sees fit, to appropriate his donation to a specific object, the field of contribution will be greatly extended, and the general approbation increased. The Board of Managers, yielding to the force of these suggestions, have in all instances given a pledge that contributions should be applied in strict obe-

*This expense is defrayed out of the collections, and is contingent on them, and, to its amount, diminishes the clear income.

dience to the will of the donors. Thus, in some instances, it has, with their approbation, been made a term, that certain contributions should be solely applied to the transportation of slaves manumitted with the express view of such transportation; in other instances, contributions have been received that are limited to purposes of education in Liberia; in others, for the purposes of supplying tracts. In all these cases it is distinctly understood that the application of the contribution shall be, as it has always heretofore been, confined to the designated end.

While, however, the Board of Managers have invariably, in good faith, observed this rule, they would respectfully recommend to the donors who prescribe it, a full consideration of its relative benefits and evils, previous to its adoption. They must be sensible, that the scheme of colonization is one of great magnitude and complexity; that the objects connected with the prosperous founding of a colony in a remote region are numerous and diversified; that the means are often experimental, and require modification from time to time, as experience, the only safe guide, shall indicate; and that those must ordinarily be the most competent to designate the best objects and means, whose official and habitual duties make them necessarily best acquainted with the state of the colony. To foster it most effectually and economically, it will, in general, be advisable, that there should be one common fund, applicable, according to varying circumstances, to the existing condition of the colony, and to the objects of the most pressing importance, instead of a fund broken into distinct fragments, thus often producing inevitably the result that, at the very moment there may be abundant funds in the treasury, for the accomplishment of all necessary objects, if unrestricted in their application, vital objects may be neglected, from the want of funds specially applicable to them; while superfluous funds, applicable exclusively to objects of minor importance, are uselessly expended, or lie idle and unproductive. A correct perception of the effect of such a course may be formed, by supposing that, in framing the Constitution of the United States, the power to lay taxes had been connected with a restricted application of them to designated objects. Could there have been devised a more effectual mode of rendering the Government incompetent to its great ends? However disproportionate these cases are in respect to their magnitude, they furnish, from their similar nature, a close analogy—the colony of Liberia, for its founding and protection, requiring, in many respects, the same exercise of powers as the United States.

It is proper here to notice a limitation of contributions, which has in some cases been applied, and which may not, perhaps, under peculiar circumstances, be liable to exception. In some sections of the Union, it has been proposed to limit the contributions raised in it to the colonization of their own people of color. It is obvious that the *general* adoption of this principle would be very injurious, if not fatal, to the rapid growth of the colony, as the wealth of the country mainly lies in those sections where there are but few subjects for colonization, and where, happily, an ardent zeal prevails. But this may not constitute a valid objection to the *special* application of the principle in particular cases, as it is probable that the readiness of the latter sections to contribute, regardless of local benefit to themselves, would not be abated by the restriction in particular districts; especially if it should be realized, that, in some districts, this might be the surest way of aiding the object; and that it might be so is not unlikely, when we consider the lively and universal interest that would be apt to be taken by a community to release itself from a serious surrounding and otherwise increasing evil.

In all these cases, notwithstanding occasional diversities of opinion, the Board of Managers and the several auxiliary societies have proceeded in harmonious concert. Means have been supplied, by or through the latter, and been applied by the former in fitting out expeditions. In one recent instance, the friends of the cause in one district, believing that it could be most vigorously prosecuted in it by confining their contributions to the colo-

nization of their own people of color, have proposed a plan for raising means, composed of moneys raised by auxiliary societies within its limits, and with them themselves fitting out the expeditions, they defraying, out of their own funds, the expenses of collecting and transporting the emigrants.

The above detailed view of the disbursements shews that the ordinary expenses of maintaining an emigrant at the colony, before he is able to support himself, amounts to about thirteen dollars, and further shows, that the expense of administering the colony, assessed to each emigrant, greatly transcends this amount. The emigrants, for the last three years, average about 227, while the expenses, exclusive of transportation, and temporary subsistence of the new colonists, exceed ten thousand dollars. It has been thought by the managers, that the payment of twenty dollars for each emigrant sent to the colony, by each auxiliary society, which might adopt the plan to which we have alluded, might diminish the evil consequences which are apprehended from its general adoption; it being evident that, otherwise, all the means raised would go to the transportation of emigrants, and those required for the general concerns of the society and colony be entirely wanting and the system be destroyed. A flourishing colony, of about two thousand souls has, with great labor, and at a large expense, been founded. It owes its success to institutions, by which it is protected from external danger, from the slave trade itself, and by which it enjoys those political and civil rights that already constitute it the safe and honorable asylum of the oppressed, and which hold out the promise of boundless benefit and grandeur to a large portion of the inhabitants of two quarters of the globe. The only way of maintaining these institutions is by meeting the expenses necessarily incident to them, and to meet these expenses a certain portion of the funds raised is indispensable. To surrender these would be either to abandon the colony, or, by jeopardizing the continuance of its greatest blessings, to convert it into a scourge, instead of an ornament of the human race.

Hitherto, the practice has been, whenever the Board of Managers had collected sufficient funds, or been assured of their seasonable receipt, for them to cause one or more expeditions to be fitted out, and to take the proper steps for carrying them into effect. These consisted, not merely in the freight of vessels, and obtaining the needful supplies for the subsistence of the emigrants on their passage, but, also, in furnishing supplies for them, for a certain period after their arrival, erecting suitable buildings for their shelter, providing medical aid, and making various other provisions for their well being. To throw the emigrants on the shores of Liberia, without these previous arrangements, would be to expose them to immolation, and to render their arrival a subject of regret, instead of gratulation, to the older colonists. These arrangements have, consequently, gone hand in hand with the expeditions that have been conducted by the Board of Managers. The proposed plan, in divesting the Board of Managers of any direct agency in fitting out any expedition, in the districts in which it may obtain, does not supersede their duty to make all the necessary provisions for the welfare of the emigrants, thus transported, after their arrival at the colony. These expeditions may be conducted, possibly, on a large and unprecedented scale. Their promoters avow the hope that they will be. Hence, the increased obligation on the Board of Managers, to secure the means, without which, it might be totally impracticable to fulfil their duties. What would be the state of things, how fatal might it not be to the whole scheme, if emigrants should be transported beyond the means for their accommodation? And yet, this would be the actual consequence of the exclusive application of the funds to the transportation of emigrants. When, indeed, we consider the necessary unity of the colony, and that its success and progress can alone flow from a systematic course of measures, emanating from, and executed by, one common authority, it should not occasion surprise, if it shall eventually be found that even the plan that confers on particular districts the power of fitting out expeditions, will be pernicious. In a certain degree it certainly will have the effect of

destroying the nationality of the object, and of subverting a course of systematic measures. It will also have the effect of impairing the unbroken responsibility that otherwise would attach to one central agency, invested with authority to direct the whole machine. Nor should it escape notice, that this beneficent scheme owes much of its success and grandeur to the concentration at one point of the direction of the resources and efforts for its accomplishment, and that its location at the Seat of the General Government gives it not only a character of nationality, but furnishes the surest means of concentrating the opinions and efforts of the whole Union. Whatever is done is here done in the view of the whole American People, under the moral auspices, as it were, of their Legislature. The greatest confidence may hence be reposed in the prudence of measures taken under their notice and advice. Every thing is submitted to the annual meetings, composed of delegates, often, if not generally, identified with legislators, and high judicial and executive magistrates of the land, and passes through the ordeal of their scrutiny. They give birth to, and change at pleasure, the Board of Managers, who are the instruments of their will. When to these considerations are added the increasing favor of the State Legislatures to the colony, and their hoped-for influence on the Legislature of the Union, in the final adoption of measures which shall give to this pure scheme of benevolence its full and eventful development, whatever tends, however slightly, to weaken the central and national action of the system, may be well questioned.

These important considerations have had their due weight with the Board of Managers, and constituted, they trust, a most sufficient reason for the adoption of the condition attached to the somewhat independent power involved in the plan suggested; which condition, in fact, amounts to no more than the securing, contingently, funds indispensably necessary to give effect to the plan itself, and without which it might prove worse than abortive, by the death or famine of the persons transported under it, as well as seriously distressing to the elder colonists.

It has, in a recent instance, been a subject of complaint, that letters to the Board of Managers are not answered in a detail corresponding to the expectations of the writers. In all cases where either courtesy or the interests of the society require it, answers are given by the Secretary. Where neither claim it, they are not given. In all cases the utmost conciseness is aimed at. A due consideration will evince the necessity of this course. The Secretary is the sole organ of conducting the correspondence of the Society; and from the great extent of his correspondence, pervading every section of the United States, it must be evident that the devotion of his whole time would be entirely inadequate to impart the details, which, on many occasions, would doubtless be acceptable to many of his correspondents. His whole time is, indeed, devoted to the affairs of the society; but no inconsiderable portion of it is consumed in deliberations with the Board of Managers, of which he is an active member, in preparing subjects for their action upon them, in corresponding with the agents of the Society at Liberia, and in that general attention to its concerns that devolves on the principal, and almost sole executive officer in this country. Hence, it becomes indispensable, trusting to the full information spread before the public in the annual reports, and other copious statements rendered mostly through the Repository, generally to decline answers, where the information sought can be found in those publications, and to confine the answers given to such matter as they may not contain. It should be added, that there are many points that the Secretary is not competent to answer, being such as require the previous deliberation and decision of the Board of Managers, who meet but once in two weeks, unless specially convened. And when it is considered that the Board is composed of men engaged in active business, they will not, perhaps, be viewed as entirely destitute of merit, in devoting so much of their time to this object.